Artist Skill Assessment Worksheet

1. Portfolio Audit

Gather your last 5–10 works. Answer these questions:
- What skills appear consistently strong? (composition, line work, color, storytelling, etc.)
- What areas are weak or missing?
- Do you see improvement compared to older works?

2. Time Test

Pick a small piece that uses the core skill of your intended project.
- Set a time block (e.g., 3 hours).
- Could you complete it to a level you're happy with?
- Did you run out of time, get stuck, or finish easily?

3. Outside Feedback

Show your work to peers or mentors (not just friends/family).
- Ask: What do you see as my strongest skill?
- Ask: What project size/level do you think I could complete today?
- Record feedback here:

4. Reverse Benchmarking

Find a project by someone slightly more advanced than you.
- What did they do that you cannot yet replicate?
- What parts do you feel capable of attempting?
- How big was their project (time, scope)?

5. Skill Checklist

Rate yourself from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong) in each category:
- Concept/Idea generation: ___
- Technical execution (drawing, filming, editing, etc.): ___
- Consistency (finishing what you start): ___
- Workflow/Organization: ___
- Presentation/Polish: ___

6. Summary & Decision

Based on your answers above:
- What project size feels realistic right now?
- What's one skill you need to strengthen before attempting something larger?
- Can you adjust scope or collaborate to fill your gaps?

Project Sizes For Artists & Creatives (Examples)

Micro Projects (1–3 hours, very small scope)

- Goal: quick reps, experiments, or practice pieces.
- **Examples:**
- Illustrator → one-page sketch, 10 gesture drawings.
- Filmmaker → 30–60 sec test scene or camera study.
- Musician → one riff, a short loop, or practice recording.
- Writer → one-page vignette, micro poem.

Mini Projects (1–7 days, compact but finished)

- Goal: create something polished but limited in size.
- **Examples:**
- Illustrator → one polished drawing or painting.
- Filmmaker → 2–3 min short film or scene.
- Musician → one demo track or cover.
- Writer → short story (1–2k words).

Small Projects (2–6 weeks, contained scope)

- Goal: something more substantial, but still solo-manageable.
- **Examples:**
- Illustrator → small illustration series (3–5 pieces).
- Filmmaker → 5–10 min short film.
- Musician → 3-song EP.
- Writer → a short novella (10–20k words).

Medium Projects (2–6 months, collaborative or layered)

- Goal: build endurance, combine multiple skills, and possibly collaborate.
- **Examples:**
- Illustrator → artbook with 20–30 finished works.
- Filmmaker → 20–30 min short film.
- Musician → full album (8–12 songs).
- Writer → full novella or serialized story.

Large Projects (6–18 months, ambitious)

- Goal: professional-level, requires planning, resources, and possibly funding.
- **Examples:**
- Illustrator → gallery exhibition or graphic novel.
- Filmmaker → indie feature film (60–90 mins).
- Musician → concept album with videos.
- Writer → full novel (60–100k words)

Epic Projects (2+ years, career-defining)

- Goal: high ambition, collaboration-heavy, could launch a career.
- **Examples:**
- Illustrator → multi-volume manga, comic series, 20+ illustrations or Paintings, etc.
- Filmmaker → studio-backed feature, animated series, etc.
- Musician → multi-year tour, original soundtrack for film/game.
- Writer → book trilogy or major franchise.

A healthy creative progression usually moves micro → mini → small → medium → large → epic. Jumping too far too soon often causes burnout.

From: Break the Block Book by Chandelier Meli